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THE PIONEER

OF SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

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THE PIONEER
OF SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

VOL. VI, NO. 4. FEBRUARY 1918.

THE prolonged crisis through which we are passing has affected the movement for spelling reform like everything else; but on the whole we may be well satisfied with the progress of the Simplified Spelling Society in these momentous years. Although the press has been able to give us less space than formerly, it has adopted towards us a more sympathetic attitude, and, although the minds of men have been stirred and disturbed as never before, there has been no decline in the interest aroused by our activities.

The time is favourable to a broad and unbiassed consideration of proposals for educational reform, and a reform which, like the one we advocate, promises to secure efficiency and economy is bound to appeal to all who give thought to the problems of reconstruction. The supreme Education Authorities in England and Scotland have sanctioned experiments with Simplified Spelling. We look forward with confidence to the results, as we may well do in view of what has been achieved in the first experiments, of which some record is presented in what for the present must be the last issue of THE PIONEER. *That the publication of* THE PIONEER *should be suspended was decided by the Committee of the Simplified Spelling Society after long and careful deliberation. The cost of production has become very heavy, while our income has not increased.*

It is not for us to sing the praises of THE PIONEER *and of what it has achieved in the six years of its existence. Of its shortcomings we are no less painfully aware than any hostile critic. We trust that we have endured castigation with becoming humility. For the encouragement and help that we have received we offer our warm thanks. Future letters that may be addressed to the Editor will receive full consideration from the Committee. We trust that the suspension of* THE PIONEER *will not preclude us from having the advantage of helpful criticism and suggestion.*

It is our intention to keep up the interest of our members by sending them occasional bulletins and pamphlets, and we earnestly trust that they will continue to support us to the best of their ability in the arduous work of propaganda. We believe that the account of our Annual Meeting which follows will be found an effective means of showing what the Simplified Spelling Society stands for, and, in order to secure for it an extensive circulation, even among the unconverted, we have decided to print this last number of THE PIONEER *in the bad old spelling. The end must justify the means.*

Never were our prospects brighter; it rests with our members to make sure that there is no slackening of effort, and that we may ere long see the children benefiting by our work and a year of their precious school life saved, reason taking the place of unreason, and good speech being well taught. And, though it is, first and foremost, the education of our own children that we have in mind, let us always remember that a reasonably consistent spelling would, to our great gain, lead to the rapid spread of our language and literature throughout the Empire, throughout the world.

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

THE Annual Meeting of the Simplified Spelling Society was held on Thursday, January 3, 1918, at University College, Gower Street, London, W.C., Dr. R. W. MACAN, D.Lit., Litt.D., Master of University College, Oxford, presiding. In opening the proceedings,

The CHAIRMAN said: Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry that I am not Prof. Gilbert Murray; I am only the emergency man whom Prof. Ripman has called upon, and on the shortest possible notice, to take the place of Prof. Murray, who, I am sorry to say, is unwell, and is therefore unable to be with us to-night. Oddly enough, I have just come from a communion with Prof. Murray, for I have been reading his very striking paper in the current number of the " Hibbert Journal " upon the soul, and what it is. I was going to say that it has not much to do with spelling reform. Perhaps it has, though, at any rate, he does not deal with Simplified Spelling in that article. But, of course, we know that he is soul and heart with us in this matter. If he is not here in the body—which he says in the course of that article, quoting Plato, is only a corpse, the soul dragging the corpse about—we are quite sure that he is with us in the soul. I must say that I think it is no bad omen of the cause that we all have at heart that Prof. Murray now, having no great call upon his services in Oxford—a benighted spot at the present time, from which I also have the good fortune to hail—is devoting now his great intelligence and great energies to educational matters, and has even got, I believe, a temporary berth in the Education Office. I am sure that the cause of spelling reform has nothing to lose from that association. Well, now, it was only after I entered the room this evening that I knew I should be called upon to discharge this little formal duty of taking the chair, and I am not going to inflict a long speech upon you. It is only my pleasant duty to introduce to you those gentlemen who are going to occupy our time, I am sure most profitably and advantageously, this evening. We have Mr. Henry Drummond, who has come all the way from Durham; Mr. Robert Jackson, who hails from Dundee; and Mr. Ezra Sykes, who is Head Master of the York Road Council School, Leeds. I have only just made the personal acquaintance of these three gentlemen, though their names were not unfamiliar to me previously as associated with the good cause which we are all here to-night to support. I shall, therefore, not take up time by enlarging upon their services to our cause, but I will ask them at once to proceed without further introduction. I have only to interpolate Prof. Ripman, who has some points of pure business—what, I think, is sometimes called private business—to lay before the meeting.

PROGRESS DURING THE PAST YEAR.

Prof. RIPMAN: I should like to make a few remarks as to the work of the past year, and on some matters that may interest you as members; I take it that many of you are members, and the others are prospective members. We welcome two new Vice-Presidents: Sir Robert Baden-Powell and Mr. G. A. Christian, B.A., Vice-President of the Battersea and Wandsworth Educational Council, well known in educational circles. In spite of the War, there has been some increase in membership, and certainly no decrease in the interest shown, if we may judge by the correspondence which reaches our office. Miss Montagu, who has recently been advanced to the post of full Secretary after giving us six years of

loyal and very able service, has been busy distributing literature and sending out circulars. The members of Parliament have all been circularized twice during the year, and each should have received, and then should have digested, *Breaking the Spell.* During the year we have published the *Sekond Reeder* in Simplified Spelling; we have reprinted *Breaking the Spell*, that is the old volume formerly called *Simplified Spelling: an Appeal to Common Sense.* It still remains an appeal to common sense, which explains its limited circulation. *The Star* has been reprinted, and the *Ferst Reeder*, and THE PIONEER has got near to the end of Volume VI. I am sorry to say that we must suspend the publication of THE PIONEER, since the cost of production has doubled; but we hope to send out bulletins and pamphlets to our members, which to some extent will make up for it. The petition asking for a Commission to deal with spelling reform has received some eight hundred fresh signatures, many of them coming from the Colonies, where our movement is arousing increased interest. We have received a great deal of help in propaganda work, partly from those who are going to address you this evening—from Mr. Jackson, Mr. Drummond (whom we may well regard as a pioneer of spelling reform in this country), Mr. Sykes, and Dr. Macan, who presides this evening, and who contributed that admirable preface to *Breaking the Spell*, which many of you have read. Then there is Dr. Hunter, of Newcastle, who has given us most welcome support in spite of his many activities: he is head of the great shipbuilding firm of Swan, Hunter, & Richardson. We have further to thank especially Mr. Brodrick (of Liverpool), Miss E. Wood, Miss Werner, and Mr. Ed. Bagnall (of Wandsworth), Mr. Hodder (of Leeds), Mr. Mayman (of Hull), and Mr. J. Walker (of Colchester). Another keen helper, Captain J. N. Griffiths, of the British Expeditionary Force, has recently been killed in action. Prof. Gilbert Murray, whose absence we all regret, is an official of the Board of Education, and, as such, has been able to give us very valuable help. He is also a Fellow of the British Academy, who are now taking a great interest in Simplified Spelling. But the action of the Board of Education is most important of all, for they have sanctioned experiments in Simplified Spelling; and they have entrusted those experiments to one of their ablest Inspectors, Mr. H. M. Richards. What you are going to hear from Mr. Jackson refers to experiments made previously to that sanction. They were made in Dundee. That is the sort of thing we are accustomed to; the Scotch lead the way in such experiments, but we are going to try to run them close. I will not detain you longer, but gladly yield place to Mr. Drummond.

THE EXPERIENCES OF A SPELLING REFORMER.

Mr. HENRY DRUMMOND: With the Chairman I regret the absence of Prof. Murray, especially the grounds of his absence. All of us would have been delighted to have his presence and his wisdom in connexion with this subject; but, failing his presence, we have had an excellent substitute in the person of Dr. Macan. He, to me, at any rate, is one whom I appreciate highly, inasmuch as at one time of his life he was not a spelling reformer; but he had an open mind, and I am glad that he allowed Prof. Max Müller to expand it and inform it. The result is that for forty years at least he has been an active spelling reformer. I hope that, if there are any here whose attitude as to spelling reform resembles that of Dr. Macan forty years ago, they will follow his example and advice, and read the excellent article which the Professor contributed to the "Fortnightly Review" about forty-three years ago.

The Delights of Phonography.

I commenced to learn phonography in 1873. How the "Phonetic Teacher" came into my hands, except by my paying for it, I cannot say; and why I should start to learn phonography is equally obscure, for, when at school and well into my teens, I had little or no desire to read or learn anything—certainly not to be my own teacher. I made an exception in favour of phonography. After writing out and committing to memory the alphabet, which I thought I should never surmount, all else was plain sailing; and 1 have never studied anything with so much ease, pleasure, and devotion. Through it I was weaned, perhaps too much, from games, and became interested in literature, politics, and religion. These interests have been my delight ever since, and, instead of being an indifferent student, my time was consumed by reading newspapers and books. Although phonography was my pet study, I had no encouragement at home to pursue it. I was told it would never be any use to me. I disregarded this advice, and went on with my "Phonographic Teacher" and other textbooks as in a sea of glory, but not beyond my depths.

Contrast these opinions with those entertained to-day respecting shorthand. The lament in some quarters is that there are too many learning it; I deny it. Its acquisition should be attempted by all, and, as John Bright affirmed, the advantages would be incalculable. By becoming a phonographer I became a reader of the "Phonetic Journal." I looked more eagerly for its weekly issue than for anything else. Its pages influenced me in many ways, for it was not confined to the furtherance of phonetics, but comprised helpful selections from several authors. I shall always feel my indebtedness to its inspiring and elevating power, and my everlasting admiration for its noble and self-sacrificing editor for sixty years—Sir Isaac Pitman. What I read in the "Phonetic Journal" coloured my thoughts and actions, and led me into channels of thought I little dreamt of. When I had acquired a fair knowledge of phonography, I was more or less enthusiastic in the diffusion of phonographic principles—by teaching others, writing essays, or being a member of an "Ever-circulator," wherein a certain space was allotted for criticism and original or selected matter. I thus became an amateur journalist. One of my old conductors, the Rev. John Thomas of Exmouth, I am glad to say, is still alive, carrying on the good work that he began many years ago. If I may, I should like to impress upon phonographers to ally themselves with similar channels of phonographic activities and advancement.

Sir Isaac Pitman.

As my acquaintance with phonography grew, and my ardour and love for the "Phonetic Journal" increased, my correspondence with Sir Isaac Pitman enlarged beyond the ordinary exchanges of a publishing house. I investigated his proposals concerning phonography and spelling reform, for his mind was ever active to the very end, and I made suggestions which, oftener than not, he bowled out of court. He was a tough reformer to overcome. His orders were short and inflexible, "Test for a week, and report."

If my "fancy's fairy fretwork" could not stand "a glimpse of fair reason," it faded away from his logical and practical mind. It was a rigid school for an enthusiast to graduate in, but I am glad I submitted to his commendable rule, which has enabled me to look upon the problems of life, if not "in the limelight of fancy," certainly "in the daylight of fact" and experience, so that I am seldom depressed by defeat or elated by success. No doubt some of my compeers "retired hurt" when the

fabric of their vision respecting some proposed improvement they desired to effect in phonography or phonetic spelling was left to "blush unseen," by Sir Isaac's rejection of their suggestions. Many a man has become a bitter opponent because some creation of his brain has not been valued by a master mind as highly as by the author himself. These highly strung personages are not extinct. I shall not ask the Editor of THE PIONEER to name them. In some instances I had the satisfaction of bringing Sir Isaac round to my way of thinking. Phonography laid the foundation of my spelling reform proclivities, and, if I had consulted a phrenologist, I could not have been led into a happier vein of thought or activities more to my liking. Phonography provided a logical basis for script, which was utilized very widely for journalistic work. The commercial world was slow to yoke it into harness for the dispatch of business, but its worth grew and grew amazingly. Government Departments looked at it with a shudder, until Prof. Fawcett and Mr. Chamberlain, much aided by my old friend Mr. J. B. Rundell, brushed aside the stately demeanour of "go-as-you-please" pace at Whitehall, when it was enough to give matters "serious consideration"—and forget them.

PHONOGRAPHY AND SPELLING REFORM.

The contentions of Sir Isaac Pitman, Dr. Ellis, and others, that the phonetic principle employed in script was capable of being applied with considerable advantage to print, convinced me; and I am of the same opinion to-day. When I have looked at the famous "Phonetic News," and the various books printed phonotypically, I have failed to understand the opposition which this type of printing created in the forties and fifties. As to the practicability of the project for immediate or general adoption, I am less sanguine now than then. Mankind is terribly sluggish. It believes as well as sings, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be." Would that we could ring out this inertia! Pitman's mind was cast in a different mould. Just as Nature abhors a vacuum, he abhorred everything that was illogical or unjust. His reason and conscience were highly attuned, and he allowed them to be his guide—following whithersoever they led him, often at the cost of friends, time, labour, and money. Perhaps he did not sufficiently allow for the diversities of mind and conscience in others, or make wide enough margin for corporate action with those of a slower type than his own. Later in life, especially with regard to spelling reform, he modified his conception of the situation, as in the adoption of less drastic changes, comprised in his "Five Rules" for spelling. No one will ever know the price Pitman paid for his ideals and projects, and how little personal reward he received or desired for most of the many long and laborious years of his noble life. He humorously expressed his desire to exchange his knighthood for an improvement in phonography or phonotypy.

PRESS PROPAGANDA FOR SPELLING REFORM.

I was twenty-one when I wrote my first letter on "Spelling Reform." It was for the "Newcastle Weekly Chronicle." From my notes sprang a prolonged discussion, revealing Mr. Tim Healy, M.P., then a clerk in Newcastle, as a redoubtable spelling reformer, whose children were first taught to read phonetically. I have been writing to its columns ever since, and have written thousands of letters, notes, essays, and articles during the past thirtyeight years. I hope to continue to do so until the end of the chapter. If such an evil thing as an irregular orthography is permitted in the regions

beyond I shall undertake a similar course of action, without being told that my letters could not be printed for lack of space; this editorial excuse will be inadmissible in mansions fair. The "Leeds Mercury" and "Durham Weekly Chronicle" also accorded me space for many letters, expanding often into discussions. The most lively and protracted debate with which I had to do was conducted in the "Yorkshire Post." One summer, when on my holidays, I sent a short letter to that most excellent journal. The editor honoured it with a "note." I replied to the note after breakfast, and dispatched my second letter by the first post. My reply appeared the next morning, and again a "note" was appended to my second letter. I returned to the fray as before. This warfare between the editor and myself was kept up for about six days. By this time the atmosphere became warm, and for six weeks the discussion was carried on under considerable pressure, and in peculiar circumstances as far as I was concerned. Part of the work was done when I was travelling and staying at hotels. Mr. Phillips, the editor, although not in favour of reform, was good enough to say that the correspondence had been interesting to him. Subsequent contests of a less prolonged character have been engaged in in the "Yorkshire Post," while the "Schoolmaster," "Christian World," "Manchester Guardian," "The British and Colonial Printer," "Academy," "Phonetic Journal," and many other journals—some in Canada and America—"The Herald," and "Jurnal ov Orthoepi and Orthografi"—have allowed me to ventilate the subject of spelling reform. Perhaps there were few newspaper discussions on the question in which I did not take part.

Propaganda in Correspondence.

In my private correspondence I employ more or less modified forms of spelling. My notepaper proclaims the testimony of Sir James Murray and Prof. Skeat. For many years up to my retirement from active commercial life I used abbreviated spelling, even to my superiors, without any rebuff; although one of them was fastidious about the spelling of proper names. I still send out certain half-yearly announcements and draw cheques bearing modified forms. No one has said that they could not read the notices, and not a single cheque has been refused. I have issued public announcements adorned with sensible spelling; no one has been misled or suffered any harm, although the circulation of these has not always met with the approval of a few friends.

Mr. Alexander Paterson and I were the means of establishing the "Speling Leeg" in honour of Sir Isaac Pitman's eightieth birthday. I endeavoured to continue it after his death, but did not succeed. By an incidental remark of a friend in a railway carriage, disparaging the status of spelling reform, I was led to compile "The Case for Spelling Reform." It received the approval of Sir Isaac Pitman, Dr. Harris, late Commissioner for Education in America, and Dr. Hamilton, editor of the "Herald," Toronto. I sent a copy to my friend, the instigator of the pamphlet, and he was candid enough to express his amazement at the strength of the case for reform; but he had no desire to continue the argument. "The Case" was too strong for him.

I did not make a fortune by its compilation, but just escaped writer's cramp. I have done a little lecturing for the Simplified Spelling Society, chiefly before teachers. They are practically unanimous in favour of reform, although they have little idea of the full indictment that can be made against their greatest bugbear in the school.

An Experiment with Simplified Spelling.

Within the past few weeks an infants' mistress, Miss Davison, in Hetton-le-Hole, has undertaken to experiment with Simplified Spelling. In four weeks she was able to report favourably of the interest on the part of the children and teacher. The work covered in the month was about equal to twelve months' experience in the old spelling. It has been a joy to me to find the experiment so enthusiastically taken up in my native place, and meeting with such gratifying success. Mr. Jackson and Mr. Sykes will deal more particularly with this excellent enterprise of the Simplified Spelling Society, backed by the Board of Education.

The True and the False Orthography.

I have circulated much literature. I seldom send a letter to a new correspondent without enclosing a leaflet or something bearing on spelling reform, and when on a journey some trace of the subject is left behind. You will remember Dr. Macan saying that he became a spelling reformer by reading Max Müller's article on "Spelling."

Why have I done this work? Because the present system of spelling is not correct. Orthography is said to be the correct method of spelling words. Was there ever a more incorrect definition? To what language does it apply? One of the languages to which it does not apply is our own, for it is, as Mr. Gladstone said, "without method, rule, or system." The only spelling that can be described as being correct is phonetic spelling, a spelling that records the spoken word. This is the mission of spelling. If it does not do so, as English spelling fails to do, then spelling is arbitrary and incorrect. Tried by any conceivable standard of correctness, English orthography is lawless, erratic, illogical, and antiquated. What does "incorrect spelling" mean, especially as regards English spelling? At the very gateway of knowledge and all along its pathway it impedes the legitimate progress of students, entails needless labour upon teachers, and imposes an unwarrantable financial burden on the nation. This triple imposition is not creditable to a civilized community. Years ago the country cancelled the taxes upon knowledge, but it permits as great an obstacle to stand in the path of education as its present method of adorning written speech. The taxes have gone, so ought the spelling embargo to go. After many tinkerings and failures over Education Bills for the education of the masses, we have left untouched one of the chief hindrances—our spelling—to the mental development and intelligence of the nation.

During the discussion in the "Yorkshire Post" Mr. Phillips made certain proposals to me. He assumed that I did not make a religion of phonetic spelling; I must confess I do, believing that everything is, or ought to be, touched and moulded by the Divine economy; else what are reason and conscience for? It was these characteristics, so highly developed in Sir Isaac Pitman, quite apart from his boundless energy, that drew me to him, and served to retain my deep affection for him. Upon what nobler sphere can we enter than the emancipation of the slave? It is great to break the shackles of the tyrant, greater to free the mind, and greater still to give scope and freedom to the soul and spirit of man. In all those phases of emancipation the regeneration of a nation's orthography plays a subtle and important part. Even if we were an insignificant nation, we could not with credit ignore our idiotic and cumbrous spelling; but, being what we are, and our enemies being judges, we cannot afford to be indifferent to the immense blessings which a rational orthography would contribute to the unfolding of our glorious literature, system of Government, and gigantic trade: to our mighty Empire, to our numer-

ous Allies—and, indeed, to the world. Our history in the past has been unique; its future should—or shall we say *shall?*—be more glorious when peace has been restored. No needless or wasteful obstacles should be allowed to impede its beneficent sway, so that the soul within us shall not die, but fill a fuller, fairer, and nobler sphere by putting an end to the thraldom of ignorance, vice, and selfishness.

The invention of phonetic alphabets by Ellis and Pitman, and the use to which the brothers Pitman and the early phonographers applied them for teaching children to read, showed the immense advantages the new systems had over the ordinary alphabet. The pages of the early "Phonetic Journals" testify to this. By the Simplified Spelling Society's alphabet, as we have seen it applied in various parts of the kingdom, much saving of time is effected. You will hear more of this anon.

Pioneers of the Past.

We are indebted to a noble roll of men who have gone before us. I should like to pay my tribute to the self-sacrificing and gifted services of Dr. A. J. Ellis, particularly for his book, *A Plea for Phonetic Spelling*, the most exhaustive treatise on the subject; to Max Müller for early recognition in his lectures of Pitman's labours, and his remarkable article on "Spelling"; to Sir James Murray for his addresses on and firm adherence to and furtherance of spelling reform; to Prof. Skeat for his courageous and outspoken testimony in favour of reform, for his great work, *Principles of English Etymology*—a mine of rich ore for advocates of phonetic spelling—and to Prof. Furnival for his practical testimony to reform by daring to use modified forms. To Prof. Sayce, Dr. Sweet, Dr. Latham, Dr. Morris, Dr. Angus, and Dr. Abbott, happily still alive, we owe much. Among workers of another type were Dr. Gladstone, Sir Charles Reed, Sir John Bennett, Sir Walter Trevelyan and Sir Charles Trevelyan. Their work and worth should ever be had in adoration. I cannot omit naming old friends—Mr. Edwin Jones for his untiring efforts in the "Schoolmaster" and numberless other periodicals, and as Secretary to the Spelling Reform Conference of forty years ago; Mr. Thomas Allen Reed, a pioneer phonographer of renowned fame; Mr. Henry Pitman, who faithfully aided all phonetic propaganda; Mr. J. B. Rundell, ever active in his day in official circles; Dr. Larison, editor of the "Jurnal ov Orthoepi and Orthografi" and Dr. Hamilton, editor of "The Herald," Toronto, happily still in active service. I recall their memory and pay my homage to them. There are many more, but I leave my friend Mr. Burch's forthcoming *History of the Spelling Reform Movement* to proclaim their labours and work.

An Appeal to Phonographers.

I may be addressing phonographers. Will they allow me to appeal to them to use and propagate the twofold phonetic principle in script and in printing, especially for the benefit of the young? They could not pay a greater tribute to their illustrious chief than by becoming practical and active spelling reformers, for Sir Isaac Pitman cared more for phonetic spelling than phonography. Is it not possible for printers and journalists to break away from the trammels of the "Rules of the Office" and adopt a few sensible forms gradually? They have a mighty weapon in their hands which could be made very effective in advancing modified forms, as many are doing in America, where hundreds of journals freely use certain forms of abbreviated spelling. Commercial men have seen great changes in the clerical work which increased trade and rapidity of movement have

brought into use, but, in the writing, typing, and printing of correspondence and other documents, they adhere to the cumbrous methods of the old spelling. They have gained much by the use of phonography; a further saving of time and labour would be effected by the employment of amended spelling. Why write and type so many useless symbols in words when a less number would answer the purpose? Will they not cast aside this lumber and free clerkdom from a needless burden? The following forms suggested by the Simplified Spelling Society might form a first instalment:—"Tho, altho, thru, thruout, thoro, hav, shoud, woud, program, catalog."

Rational Spelling a National Need.

The general community has an interest in this question, and its power should be exercised on behalf of a rational system of spelling, both in its own interest and in that of the young. Unless the bulk of the people are able to read and take an interest in reading, there is no prospect of the intelligence of the nation reaching that pinnacle of safety and wellbeing which is required of us. Ignorance is a greater factor for evil than we have as yet realized, and anything that retards the progress of knowledge and mental development should be removed. It is generally admitted that our orthography impedes children learning to read by one or two years. Mr. Mais made this statement in "The Journal of Education":—"Boys leave us ignorant of how to spell the commonest words; unable to express themselves coherently or adequately on any subject; with a vocabulary as meagre as that of a bricklayer; with little sense of citizenship, and a vague sort of patriotism that makes of that most precious possession only too often a resounding, empty name; lamentably deficient in breadth of view, and without any sense of vision." This is a frightful waste of precious and unredeemable time, and is a premium on ignorance which the children of the working classes should not be called upon to endure. Let us cease to worship this goddess—English orthography—by seeking to obtain what Prof. Skeat desired—the "smashing of our common spelling." This can be done by adopting certain modified forms and supporting teachers in the use of simplified spelling. To teachers I beg to make my strongest appeal to adopt sensible spelling in all they write, type, or print, and to leave no stone unturned for the introduction of simplified or phonetic spelling into every infant school and the early standards in adult schools. They need the best instruments for their important duties in the education of the young; blunted and obsolete tools should be discarded. Every assistance which reason and science can render, to make the work of teachers more efficient for the strenuous times ahead, must be brought into play. If they secure this emancipation for themselves and for the childhood of the present and the future, they will be worthy of a blessing akin to that paid of old: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of the British Empire, ye did it unto mankind."

The Chairman: I am sure we have listened with the completest interest to Mr. Drummond's reminiscences of his experiences, and to the tribute he has paid to the pioneers of spelling reform. His experiences are an encouraging example to all those who are already convinced believers in the cause, but there is nothing alarming evidently about his experiences. The spelling reformer has not got to fear rotten eggs, or tar and feathers, or anything of that sort. What we are up against is rather apathy and indifference, and to dispel that we require enthusiasm, such enthusiasm as Mr. Drummond has shown through his life—which seems to me to have been very much longer than I should judge from his appear-

ance. Now we are to listen to something which will also, I think, be very encouraging to us, because really we have won the argument long ago, and the other side has not got a leg to stand on. Mr. Drummond's remarks have shown what an immense body of authority there is on our side. It is almost true to say that there is not a single expert who is not a spelling reformer. But we are up against a great mass of indifference and apathy; and what is necessary to convince the British public is successful experiment. The two gentlemen who are next to address us are to bring before us what have proved to be practical and successful experiments, and I feel sure they are doing the great work of the present moment.

Mr. ROBERT JACKSON, of the Training College, Dundee: I have had personal experience of several experiments in the teaching of reading by means of reformed spelling.

A FIFESHIRE EXPERIMENT.

A few years ago an infant mistress in Fifeshire, after attending classes in phonetics organized by the St. Andrews Provincial Committee for the Training of Teachers, introduced the phonetic method into her classes, making use of a modified form of the alphabet of the International Phonetic Association. The result was eminently satisfactory. Within a comparatively short time the pupils learnt to read anything that described facts within their own experience, and to write and spell any such words as came within their natural diction with almost perfect accuracy. Facility in learning to read was accompanied by a very marked improvement in their speech. Miss McCallum, the teacher responsible, still uses a phonetic method, but has altered the values of the letters to lighten the pupils' work in the transition stage.

THE EXPERIMENTS IN DUNDEE.

During recent years there have been three experiments carried on in Dundee schools. The first was made in Clepington School. It was described pretty fully in THE PIONEER of August 1915. The results might be summed up as follows. Pupils who had been taught by means of Simplified Spelling for ten months, and had then learnt the conventional spelling for four months—fourteen months in all—could read as well and spell as well as pupils who had been at school for nineteen months, and had been taught exclusively the conventional spelling. The balance of difference was altogether on the side of the pupils who had been taught on the new lines. They had acquired a better and more natural utterance and expression, and had laid a more solid foundation for the subsequent cultivation of good, clear speech. Untoward circumstances prevented the continuance of the experiments beyond one year; but a few months ago the Simplified Spelling method was reintroduced, with results that are giving full satisfaction.

HOW TO TEACH THE SOUNDS.

[Mr. Jackson next described the methods employed in two other highly successful experiments, in Dens Road School last year and Morgan Academy this year. The teachers of these schools had kindly lent him their charts and wall-sheets for exhibition at the meeting. The charts and the methods used in the two schools corresponded very closely, and might be described somewhat as follows:—

The First Chart for Infants contains the symbols for about a dozen sounds, thus: *m, n; v, dh, z; l; r; ee, ai; oo, oe.*

The sounds are chosen (and the letters arranged) on scientific principles:

1. They are long, or can be made long, so as to give both ear and speech organ a grip of the sound.
2. They are voiced to give the child a grip of sonority.
3. Their "on-glides" and "off-glides" are so like the body of the sound as to be practically non-existent.
4. They can be easily isolated.

Words containing certain sounds are got from the class and printed on the blackboard, beginning from the end of the word, as shown in the examples of syllable-building on pages 8 and 9 of the *Ferst Reeder*. Sentences are next made containing the word. The wall-sheets hung up behind the platform gave numerous examples of words and sentences actually used in the classes, and showed also how these are arranged to further speech-training.

Incidentally, Mr. Jackson remarked that not one of the critics of the *Ferst Reeder* had referred to the examples of syllable building or the hints for chart practice. Apparently the critics were innocent of any knowledge of the principles of systematic speech training in the infant school.

The Second Chart was as follows:—*m, n, ng; v, dh; z, zh* (voiced); *f, th; s, sh* (voiceless); *l; r; ee, ai; oo, oe; au; aa; y, ou, oi, eu.* This chart adds the diphthongs and such voiceless sounds as have their other qualities similar to those of sounds in the First Chart.

Wall sheets and illustrative sentences were shown as before and their scientific use explained.

The Third Chart adds the short vowels and semivowels. Of the open sounds they are the most difficult vowels to isolate and have been prepared for by previous daily practice in the long sounds: *m, n, ng; v, dh, z, zh; y, w; f, th, s, sh; y, (hy), w, wh; l, r; ee, ai; oo, oe, au; aa; y, ou, oi, eu; i, e, a; oo, o, u.* Wall sheets for words and sentences were shown as before.

The Fourth Chart is the full chart (see *Ferst Reeder*, pages 6, 7). It completes the list of sounds and symbols by the addition of the "stopped" consonants and the consonantal diphthongs.

The "stops" are taken up last in the special study of individual sounds, because their "off-glides" in isolation are so strong as to suggest another or second sound. They should be introduced first at the beginning of a word—thus: "oe, loe, bloe." In this way the pupil's eye gets accustomed to the appearance of the symbol, and the ear to the sound, as it occurs in the living word before it is studied in isolation.

This method of chart division secures that *all* sounds and symbols are introduced gradually and studied systematically. They are each and all exemplified by living sentences taken from the child's own vocabulary. The *Ferst Reeder*, it is to be remembered, is a "reader" and presupposes the use of such sentences as were shown on the Dens Road School and Morgan Academy charts and wall sheets. They are not artificial, mechanical sentences based on spelling only, like those of the ordinary phonic books. For instance, one of the Dale readers excludes all the long vowels. These are—*ee*, with 24 ways of spelling; *ai*, with 25 ways of spelling; *oo*, with 24 ways of spelling; *oe*, with 23 ways of spelling; *au*, with 11 ways of spelling; *aa*, with 8 ways of spelling.

While that book is in class use, pupils are not obtaining speech practice in those sounds, nor are their eyes being trained to the re-

cognition of the hundred odd forms that represent them in the ordinary spelling. Perhaps this may explain why the charge of "bad spelling" is often brought against pupils taught on the Dale system, bad spelling being, according to those who have given no thought to educational values, a greater proof of ignorance than bad speaking, bad English, bad everything else in the school curriculum.]

What has been achieved.

The results of the experiments in the four schools—Lumphinnans (Fifeshire), Clepington, Dens Road, and Morgan Academy (Dundee)—prove that the forty forms that represent the forty sounds of English speech can be mastered in a few weeks, and that thereafter only a little practice is needed until the pupil can decipher any word whatever that forms part of his daily diction, or that, keeping in mind the stage of his mental growth, can legitimately be introduced in teaching.

But the question may be asked—in fact, always is asked—What of the transition to the ordinary spelling? In not one of these schools has the transition given anything like the trouble that was anticipated. I recently visited the Dens Road class, now in the transition stage. I heard the class do a bit of unseen reading from a book in the ordinary spelling. The fruits of the consistent training in the relation of sound and symbol showed themselves in the grip and intelligence and readiness with which the pupils read the "nomic" forms, which of course to them were new. The combination of stress and intonation, and the ease of utterance, proved that the naming of the words was real pleasurable reading, and that the meaning was being caught as the words were uttered.

I also recently spent an afternoon with the class in Clepington School in which are the subjects of the Simplified Spelling experiments of 1915. It is now two years and a half since they laid aside the *Ferst Reeder*. The two sections of the class were tested in the *Sekond Reeder*, just published and new to all of them, and in the class reading book. The pupils who began on the Simplified Spelling method are still ahead of the other pupils in ease of utterance and in the superior purity of their vowel sounds. The foundations of good speech have been laid firm and sure. No difference revealed itself in the spelling of the two sections.

What is claimed for Simplified Spelling.

My experience gives me confidence in claiming that the use of Simplified Spelling, or any form of consistent spelling throughout the school course, would save a whole year of the child's school life; would help the training of ear, eye, and speech organs; give increased facilities for the cultivation of self-expression and thought development, and would permit language teaching generally to be conducted in accordance with the laws of mind growth to a degree absolutely impossible with the present spelling.

A Yorkshire Experiment with Simplified Spelling.

Mr. Ezra Sykes: It is my privilege and honour to make a report on work that has been done in a Yorkshire school.

Difficult Conditions.

The York Road School may be described as a typical poor district school in the heart of Leeds. The children are sturdy little Britons, charming personalities, but obscured and handicapped by a sordid environment. Their speech is a mixture of broad Yorkshire dialect and slovenly English. School speech to them is a strange tongue, interspersed

with a few familiar words. Very few of the children possess such a luxury as a book: the play books, picture books, and story books that delight children in better circumstances are unknown to them, and the only books they ever see are the school books. I mention these facts in order that you may realize the difficult conditions under which the experiment has been made. The difficulties, however, enhance the value of the experiment; because, if success can be achieved in such adverse circumstances, one may imagine what the results would be under more favourable conditions.

What the Children Knew.

Now at the beginning of the experiment the children had all passed through the babies' class, and had a slight acquaintance with the simple letters. Out of forty-two children in the class ten knew the sounds of the eighteen consonants, seven knew the sounds of seventeen consonants, six knew the sounds of sixteen consonants, three knew the sounds of fifteen consonants, three knew the sounds of fourteen consonants, six knew the sounds of thirteen consonants, three knew the sounds of twelve consonants, one child knew the sounds of eleven consonants, one child knew the sounds of nine consonants, one child knew the sounds of six consonants, and one child called every letter "ber." Seven children knew the sound of *th*, and four knew the sound of *sh*; the sounds of the remaining digraphs, *ch*, *dh*, *wh*, *zh*, and *ng*, were not known. Forty-one children knew the short sounds of *a* and *o*, thirty-nine knew the short sounds of *e* and *i*, thirty-seven knew the short sound of *u* (as in "put"), twenty-six knew the long sound of *u* (as in "truth"), and fourteen knew the long sound *ee* (as in "sweet"). The other combined or long vowels, designated in S.S. *aa*, *ai*, *au*, *oe*, *er*, *oi*, *eu*, and *ou*, were not known by a single child. The children had not reached the stage of combining two or more letters. I tried several of the brighter children with *o-f* and *i-s*, and three of them managed to give me "*off*, *iss*." Some of the children were inclined to be playful and talkative, eager to show their drawings. Others expressed themselves merely by a nod or shake of the head when spoken to.

The Beginning of the Experiment.

Such was the class with which the experiment began on the 1st of May, 1917. For the first two weeks, in order to give the experiment a good start, by the courtesy of the Head Mistress, I spent much time with the class, assisting the class teacher with each reading lesson. The teacher was capable and sympathetic, and, owing to her splendid efforts, the class made remarkable headway. After making sure of the short vowels and simple consonants, a start was made with the digraphs. Then the children were encouraged to join two sounds, and they soon knew and could read words such as "and it iz dhe boi." Most of this work was done on the blackboard. I then prepared wall sheets, with short sentences in easy words. These words and sentences were first built up on the blackboard, and they dealt with incidents with which the children were familiar, or which appealed to their limited imagination. For example, I wrote on the blackboard, *j-o-n*. The children discovered the word and some of them said "It is John Cope." Right. Now we will make a story about John: "Jon had a peni, tu by a peni bun; run, jon, run jon, by a peni bun; run, skip, hop, tu dhe shop; run, jon, run, jon, by a peni bun." The children joined in this heartily, following every word as it was printed on the board, and they had plenty of fun in urging John to run, skip, hop. The work was real, alive, and the children enjoyed it. They began to realize that written

words have a power, they are more than just letters, they are living pictures by which thoughts may be expressed, and so, incidentally, the children had a first lesson in composition. The story was afterwards printed with chalk on a wall sheet, and the teacher made a coloured drawing beside it, showing John running to the shop. The children never forget the *sh* digraph, after a drawing of an engine had been made on the board, followed by the sentence :—" dhi en-jin sez ' sh, sh, sh, sh, sh, sh.' " I may say here that, for these young children, we did not find the *Ferst Reeder* of much use. A set of Primers, profusely illustrated, more childish in sentiment and using simpler words, would have speeded up the work considerably at this stage. The *Ferst Reeder* is more suitable for older or more advanced children ; our children at five years of age are no further advanced in intelligence than are most children of three years of age.

Progress—and a Temporary Set-back.

At the end of six weeks I was able to report :—" The work is making satisfactory progress, the children are already beginning to read easy sentences. That means they are two or three months ahead of what they would be doing under normal spelling." Now I felt that I could safely leave the work to the class teacher, who was by this time familiar with the scheme and quite enthusiastic because of the rapid progress that had been made. Within a fortnight, however, that is towards the end of June, the teacher fell ill and had to undergo an operation, and she did not return to duty until the 1st of November. From the end of June to the summer holidays in August the class was left to the tender mercies of supply teachers who knew nothing of Simplified Spelling and who had no sympathy with it. In September, after the summer holiday, a new teacher was put in charge. This teacher was not unwilling to take up the experiment ; but, not knowing the scheme or its possibilities, felt somewhat nervous and diffident. The Head Mistress decided to stop the experiment and for a time it was in abeyance. The local Inspector, however, when appealed to, decided that the experiment must go on and the teacher must do her best. I again visited the class about the middle of October to give the new teacher assistance, and I found the work almost at a standstill and very little in advance of what it was at the beginning of July. The new teacher was an excellent embodiment of perseverance and sympathy, and only needed confidence and assurance. She soon picked up the scheme and set to work with commendable spirit. From this point the work again began to show signs of rapid progress.

Gratifying Results.

By the end of November the brighter children needed little or no teaching. They were able to discover words for themselves, and to make out the stories in the *Ferst Reeder*. This self-help feature of the Simplified Spelling, by which the child of its own initiative discovers the words and, unaided, reads and understands sentences, did more to convince the class teacher of the immense advantages of Simplified Spelling than any amount of theorizing could have done. Here was practical proof, and both the Head Mistress and the class teacher expressed surprise at the amount of work accomplished beyond anything they had expected or hoped for. Even the little girl who named every letter " ber " at the beginning is now able slowly to make out words, and to read the simpler parts of the book ; and the dullest children in the class have all read once through the whole of the *Ferst Reeder*. Some of the brighter children

have almost finished the *Sekond Reeder*. If you will consider the difficult words which appear in the *Ferst Reeder*, I think you will agree that for the whole class to read it through once is no mean accomplishment. Such words are to be met as "afterwards, gathered, squirrels, curtains, violin, twinkle, together, journey, mountain, northern, music, pleasure, and feather." Not a bad selection for five-year-old children.

Some Difficulties.

We may now consider some of the difficulties found by the children at different stages. These all occurred in the pronunciation of words or in the digraphs, particularly in the vowels. The *h* digraphs, *dh*, *th*, *zh*, *sh*, *ch*, and *wh*, did not cause much trouble; but *oo*, *ee*, *oe*, *eu*, *ai*, *au*, and *ou* were pitfalls into which the children repeatedly fell. They could read the combinations from the wall chart, but when they came across them in a word the children invariably sounded each single letter. Thus, *oo* was pronounced *o* + *o*, or as the long vowel of "awe"; *ee* was pronounced *e* + *e*, or as the long vowel of "eh"; *oe* was pronounced *o* + *e*; *eu* was pronounced *e*+*u*, and one little girl said it was the "air" we breathed; *ai* was pronounced *a*+*i*; *ou* was pronounced *o*+*u*. To overcome this recurring difficulty, which was due to the inconsistency of vowel values—that is, the vowels in combination have not the same values as the separate vowels—the combinations were tied together by a curved line drawn over the top. The children were now told that these letters were married, and were to be regarded as one letter, not two, and, being married, their names were changed. The two values of the letter *y* were puzzling for some time. The children read *y-e-s* and called it *i-es*, which, according to their vernacular, is the word "ice." After the *y* difficulty had been apparently overcome, one boy would persist in writing *yoo* for "you," and, as he was phonetically correct according to the scheme, he was praised for his ingenuity, but told that he must write *eu*. He was evidently puzzled, but he accepted the ruling against him, though his intelligence told him that something was wrong. *O-e-v-e-r* was persistently read as *o-ever*, and *p-o-e-n-i* as *po-eni*, and *b-o-e-t-h* as *bo-eth*. But as *po-eni* and *bo-eth* are broad Yorkshire for "pony" and "both," the transition was easy. In the same way children readily translated the southern *aa* in "laaf," "daans," and "kaasel" to short northern *a*, "dans," "laf," and "kasel." The pronunciation of *er* in "her, berd, gerl" was at first invariably the *er* in "merry"; but as these are common words the children soon learnt to recognize them as "her," "bird," and "girl." *B-oo-sh* and *p-oo-t*, and *p-oo-si* were not recognized; the children uttered them with the long *oo* of "food" or the short *o* of "bosh." The reduction of combined or double vowels to a single vowel in final positions (as in "we, me, he, so, no") caused much perplexity. The leter *u* in *t-u* is misleading. Our children naturally pronounce "ter," as "ter" for "to" is Yorkshire dialect, and the spelling *t-u* says "ter." We try to teach our children to say "too" and not "ter"; we may be wrong, but personally I regard "ter" as an example of slovenly speech.

An Easy Way of Learning to Read.

Thus far our experiment has gone. We have not yet reached what we anticipate will be the most difficult stage—the transition from the Simplified to the normal spelling; and, in the light of this experiment, it seems a pity that such a transition should ever have to be made. Everything in the experiment points to the fact that, whereas learning to read under normal conditions is a long and tedious process, extending more or less through-

out the whole of school life, under the Simplified Spelling scheme a complete mastery of reading—except for the meanings of new and unfamiliar words—would be accomplished in the first two or three years. When once the children have overcome the initial difficulties of associating sounds with signs there is nothing more to learn. The children can proceed on their own initiative to decipher any and every word.

An Easy Way of Learning to Write.

So far, our experiment has been made mainly on the "reading" side. The saving of time, and encouragement of individual initiative and self-reliance of the children, have been amply and practically proved. Yet, to my mind, the greatest advantage of Simplified Spelling lies in the writing or reproductive side. Reading appeals to the eye. Each word, regardless of its spelling, becomes a word picture. A child could eventually be taught to read from any spelling, however far removed from phonetic truth the spelling might be. In reading, children do not consider the spelling, and the most successful reader is the one who, ignoring the phonetic construction of a word, commits the word-form to some pigeon-hole in his memory. Even with a simplified, or a purely phonetic spelling, the power of word recognition would require to be cultivated to ensure fluency. With the old spelling, the child takes it for granted that *y-e* spells *ye*, and *y-e-s* spells *yes*, and *e-y-e-s* spells *eyes*, because the teacher says so. In the new spelling, he takes the word for granted because the spelling says so. A child easily recognizes hundreds of words in reading, but utterly fails to reproduce the words correctly in writing. The teacher who has to mark composition exercises frequently spends most of the time in marking spelling errors, which have a tendency to overshadow the composition itself, making it appear to be only of secondary importance. The child looks ruefully on the blue pencil marks which so lavishly and unsympathetically disfigure and belittle his best effort. Our wretched spelling has much to answer for as a discourager of that most desirable accomplishment, the ability to write in good English.

No More "Look-and-Say," with its Grave Drawbacks.

Teachers are daily coming across instances where a child has reproduced a word backwards way—*d-n-a* for *and* and *o-h-w* for *who*, whilst many a child has put down all the letters in a word, but in entirely wrong order. This is only a natural result of the "look-and-say," "learn-to-read-quickly" method. With Simplified Spelling this could be largely obviated, because reading and spelling conld keep a more even pace with each other. Recognition by visual familiarity does not guarantee an accurate absorption and retention of detail. It is possible for me to recognize at a glance a person, place, or object from a drawing; yet I may be quite incapable of reproducing that drawing even approximately. So it is with reading and spelling. The child may easily recognize a word in reading and yet be quite incapable of reproducing the word accurately in writing or spelling. To acquire this power of reproduction with the normal spelling the child has to undergo a course of spelling drill, with innumerable dictation exercises. Dictation exercises are at present a necessary but sinful waste of childhood and of teachers' time and effort. Simplified Spelling ensures not only that a child recognizes a word, but it gives him the power to reproduce the word without the wasteful drudgery and necessity of spelling drill, as it calls to his aid both visual memory and reason. In the old spelling, he who reasons is lost. During this experiment it has been repeatedly demonstrated, and found possible, for children to write

correctly words which they had never before seen. How many people dare do that in the old spelling?

A Decided Success.

To sum up: the experiment, so far as it has gone, has been a decided success, realizing all the expectations we hoped from it. The class teacher —to whom, it will be remembered, the scheme was strange, and who was nervous about undertaking the work—has now only praise to bestow upon Simplified Spelling. Her diffidence has vanished, and in its place there is a cheerful confidence. The teacher is now hopeful, and firmly convinced that during the next few months the class will advance far beyond the possibilities of work under normal spelling. Our message to all infant-school teachers is one of hope and confidence. You may shake off all doubts and fears. Try the experiment yourself; you will never regret it. The progress that has already been made clearly indicates that if Simplified Spelling were officially recognized and adopted all spelling difficulties would be overcome by the time children had passed out of Standard I, which is the time under the old spelling when the real difficulties begin. Spelling lessons could with safety be omitted from the time-table, and as spelling occupies so much time in dictation and spelling exercises, in composition and in reading, think what a saving of energy and time there would be in the child's short school life. No longer need the child rely on his teacher or his spelling book: his own intelligence is sufficient. The success of Simplified Spelling should furnish a rallying cry to all interested in education, not only to demand, but to insist on the adoption and official recognition of some form of Simplified Spelling for the English language. "Let us, then, be up and doing." Let 1918 be a year of achievement! May it be known as the historic year in which the shackles of unreason in spelling were officially removed, and the year in which the thick, accumulated fogs of ages disappeared before the genial sunshine of common sense and Simplified Spelling!

In the absence of the Chairman, Prof. Ripman expressed the thanks of all present to the readers of the addresses. Owing to an interruption of the proceedings due to an air raid warning, it was impossible to have a discussion.

REPORTS OF OTHER EXPERIMENTS.

WE propose to keep our members informed of the progress made in our experiments by issuing occasional bulletins.

Morgan Academy, Dundee.

Mr. Robert Jackson writes: "The school authorities are delighted, enthusiastic in fact, over the results of their six months' experiment. They have begun the transition stage, and to their surprise my prediction as to 'little trouble' is being verified."

Lyons Council School, Hetton-le-Hole, Co. Durham.

Miss Barbara Davison, Head of the Infants' Department, writes:

> An experiment in Simplified Spelling was started in this school at the end of October 1917. The scheme drawn up was very simple, being first sounds, then syllable building, word building, sentences, and the *Ferst* and *Sekond Reeders*.
>
> We made three "sounds" charts, which were always in front of the children, who were given a few minutes each day in which to go over them. These were very soon mastered, and we then tried syllable and word building. At this stage the children showed very great interest and

were anxious for books and stories. We took sentences and stories on the B.B., following, as far as possible, the Montessori principles. The children got on so quickly at this stage that we aspired to *A Ferst Reeder*, and they are doing splendidly at it. The Montessori method of asking questions, giving orders, and other interesting ideas is followed in these Simplified Spelling reading lessons, and the children are very quick. All writing matter, recitations and words of songs, are taken in this spelling, and by the end of next term we intend to be very fluent.

There must be a very great saving of valuable time. In just over a month we have gone through the course, which by the other spelling takes at least a year. The average age of the class is six years.

New Village Council School, West Riding.

The Head Mistress writes: "Many thanks for the Readers. We have tried the system for about three months with splendid results. With the help of the Readers we expect the progress will be doubled whilst the preparation will be halved."

IN THE INTERESTS OF ETYMOLOGY.

"A PERUSAL of Archbishop Trench's *English, Past and Present* Lecture VIII, will show that it merely discusses certain spellings from a supposed 'etymological' point of view, and does not at all attempt to deal with the only question of real importance: What is the true history of our spelling, and how came we to spell words as we do? I make particular reference to this chapter, because I believe that it has unfortunately done more harm than good, as it is altogether founded on a false principle, such as no scientific etymologist would endorse in the present state of our knowledge. . . . The most important elements of our language are neither Latin nor Greek, but English, Scandinavian, and French. The English and Scandinavian elements are very carefully kept out of sight by Trench, except in a very few instances, and the French element is treated very briefly and unsatisfactorily; indeed, a careful treatment of it would have told the other way. . . .

"It is a national disgrace to us to find that the wildest arguments concerning English spelling and etymology are constantly being used even by well educated persons, whose ignorance of early English pronunciation and of modern English phonetics is so complete that they have no suspicion whatever of the amazing worthlessness of their ludicrous utterances.

"In the interests of etymology I wish the common spelling was utterly smashed."—Prof. W. W. SKEAT, *Principles of English Etymology*.

"It is not only pitiful to see the expressions of Archbishop Trench—uttered just a quarter of a century ago, when English philology was in its pre-scientific babyhood, and scarcely anything was known of our language in its earlier stages, save the outward forms in which it had come down to us in MS. or print—quoted against the rational reconstruction of our spelling; but it is unfair to Dr. Trench himself, who then stood so well in the front of philology. . . . Philology has long since penetrated the mere drapery and grappled with the study of words, not as dead marks, but as living realities, and demands facts, not fictions, to handle. None of us knew this in 1855; we were still busy with the drapery, and irate at the sacrilegious phonetists who would dare to alter our language. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing—when it does not recognize its littleness nor gain in amount in five and twenty years. . . .

"I cannot spare time to write to papers. . . . I must hasten to get the first part of the Dictionary out, for that, I believe, will supply ammunition to kill the etymological dragon."—Sir JAMES A. H. MURRAY.

FOREIGNERS AND SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

By JOSEPH HOGARTH (Johannesburg).

AT the present time THE PIONEER is the only publication of any size issued in a rational spelling; and it should offer an excellent opportunity for using it as a reading book and testing its power of facilitating the study of English.

For some time it has been my pleasure to gather a few spare PIONEERS from my friends and send them to a teacher of languages in the town of Soerabaya (population 300,000), in Java, Dutch East Indies, where he makes a successful use of them in teaching English to a number of people in that place. He says that they are very keen on learning English, and look eagerly forward for the arrival of THE PIONEER.

The following quotation, taken from page 158 of the 1913 PIONEER, is worth observing:

"I am teaching Spanish, and in a lesson *one hour long* my pupils learn to read—not, of course, to understand—with ease."

Such a test proves Spanish spelling to be exceedingly simple. Happy Spaniards! Would the scheme of Simplified Spelling stand the same test as successfully? In other words: "Could an average intelligent foreigner learn to read so well, in an hour's drill, that an Englishman could understand him?" Who will make this interesting investigation and announce the result? For Simplified Spelling to win such a test would be a great triumph, and such a triumph would win many recruits.

Even rough Simplified Spelling may not quite reach up to the mark of Spanish efficiency, yet it would still possess one very gratifying feature. It is this: the drill necessary to enable an average intelligent Briton or American to read Simplified Spelling amounts to—neither one hour, nor yet one minute, but to zero.

The number of foreigners of all races and of all colours endeavouring to learn English is very great. But present English books in the "fossilised" spelling are almost useless for these peoples. They must depend upon the living teacher, or live among English-speaking people, or give it up in despair.

The advent of THE PIONEER, however, makes a rational spelling available at last, and, as previously said, it is being used as an English reading book in Soerabaya.

Probably this may only be the beginning of a use which may yet grow to colossal proportions among the vast millions of India, China, Japan, and the Pacific Isles. Such a possibility fascinates the imagination and prompts a keen desire to carry out any further adjustment which may make the scheme of Simplified Spelling a little easier to understand and thereby assist the pupil or the foreigner to master it the more quickly.

[We are sure that our members will be interested to learn of the use to which THE PIONEER has been put in Java. It is obviously not very well fitted for the purpose of a beginners' book; perhaps the teacher of English in Soerabaya to whom Mr. Hogarth refers will now make use of the *Ferst Reeder* and *The Sekond Reeder*.]

An Invitation.

Mr. J. Marti Ramis (Cortes 399 3º 2ª, Barcelona), a young Spaniard and member of the S.S.S., seeks the privilege of corresponding in simplified spelling with some youthful fellow member—of either sex.

A FEW HINTS TO CANVASSERS OF SIGNATURES TO OUR PETITION.

INTRODUCE the subject of the need of reform in our spelling in an easy conversational manner—if anything a little off-hand rather than too emphatically. Avoid entering into arguments about technicalities or alluding to how words should be phonetically spelt, this latter being sometimes too great a change for those first introduced to the subject, and may lead to withholding support. Educationists and those really well educated know all about our faulty spelling, do not attempt to argue in its favour, and usually sign readily enough; others, unfortunately in great numbers, try to bring forward all sorts of objections, often with a view to airing their knowledge, ending usually in a display of incredible ignorance. Do not be too severe; let them down lightly or you may find them taking refuge in ridicule and obstinate refusal to have anything to do with the matter. When etymology is alluded to, mention at once it was Prof. Skeat, our greatest etymologist, who was the first President of our Society.

Make free use of the words "Spelling Reform" or "Revised Spelling" in preference to "Simplified Spelling"; this latter is very often too big a jump for our insular prejudice and ingrained conservatism—many are apt to view it as somebody's pet hobby, a fixed system they might not wholly agree with. The word "reform" is less emphatic, points to a defect and its removal. Harp on the anomalies and inconsistencies in our spelling system, or want of it, and that reform would be gradual, and deal first with these. Adapt your methods and, above all, retain your equanimity.

Always carry on you a petition form—you never know when or where a name may be obtained; folded to the size of an ordinary envelope, it fits conveniently and can be kept neat in a letter-case or pocket-book. Forms printed on the thin paper are better for carrying than those on the thick paper. *Always* have attached to the petition form one of the Society's printed lists of names of supporters—previously marking those of prominent men for convenience in drawing attention to them. The list of the Society's officers as printed on their note-paper is *most* useful, and should also be attached as, in addition to saving time and trouble in enumerating names, they are far more impressive when actually *seen*. When you consider sufficient interest has been aroused, incidentally mention your having taken great interest in the movement for reform, especially in that part relating to a Government inquiry—after the War, of course—and that, as the heading of the petition shows it to be quite non-committal, you ask them to add their signatures and thus join the eminent company and be in the van of so praiseworthy a cause. It is well to obtain the signature of some prominent local man to head the list as this is often found a great draw.

Very many signatures can thus be obtained, and once secured it is extraordinary how freely you are supported and even criticism withheld, and the question of becoming members promised consideration. Should great interest be shown it is advisable to try and secure members forthwith. In addition to the many useful data about loss of educational time, &c., set out in the Society's literature, helpful phrases are:

"Now or never is the time to undo the knots England finds herself

tied up in "—a useful rejoinder when confronted with the excuse of the War.

"Slovenliness should not be justified because it is general."

Particular points for criticism may be found, but everyone who deems the proposal for inquiry good in the main should give their support.

When writing to members of Parliament and prominent men for their support, let it be very clearly understood you are a voluntary worker, keenly interested in the movement, but have no axe to grind; don't use the Society's note-paper; your own looks much more independent, and with your private or business address printed on it a better appearance is produced. It is essential to have several petition forms in use contemporaneously—they are often kept some time before returned, and even the delays of transit by post are thus avoided.

The above "Hints" are more particularly useful when finding yourself in company likely to raise arguments or criticism—as sometimes among the better educated, those thinking themselves so, old-fashioned folk, those advanced in years. When, however, you meet people, in your estimation of active minds, holding more up-to-date views of things in general (so easy to ascertain by a few leading queries), then it is better, and *much quicker*, simply to produce your petition form with the casual remark that "it is a little hobby of yours, and would they *like* to add their names," pointing first of all to the attached printed list of supporters and the Society's officers, and then to the heading of the petition, it's quite non-committal nature, and to any leading local names you have already secured. Don't forget to ask if they would *like* to add their names: it's more effective than asking them to do so. It is often a useful plan to leave your petition and call again for it in a few days' time; often one finds several members of the household have added their names.

J. W.

[The writer of these "Hints" has done most valuable service to our movement, and has been singularly successful in obtaining signatures for the petition. His article, apart from its practical value, has not a little psychological interest.—ED. PIONEER.]

NOTES AND NEWS.

The membership of the Society now numbers 2972.

Russia and Simplified Spelling.

After referring to the fiercest snowstorm for years and a general shortage of fuel in Petrograd, a correspondent continues: "But it takes more than little things like that to disturb some people, for the Government imperturbably decrees that Russia shall adopt phonetic spelling as from January 14; and, not content with having abolished the Church, marriage, property, land, houses, and bank laws, is now suppressing three vowels and a consonant."

It is interesting to record, in this connexion, that—in spite of the Revolution—people living in Petrograd and other parts of Russia continue to write for our literature and information about our scheme.

Do not Blame the Children.

Said the editor of the "Leicester Daily Post" the other day: "If any reader would like to test his orthographical powers, let him try his skill upon the fol-

lowing list of words, which were dictated (with "explanatory context") at a recent examination for free scholarships to county children :

'Pastry, plentiful, rinse, acute, assent, waistcoat, shirt-sleeves, fortieth, suspense, justice, immense, starred, furlough, whizzing, fined, yawn, discern, zealous, wrangling, suspicion, immigrant, wiliness, barbarous, wood-mite, whiff, perfume, eccentricity, stealthily.'

At first glance they look simple enough, and they are certainly not words that should be outside the range of the average boy or girl of ten years and upwards ; yet, out of about three hundred children none spelt all correctly, and only eighty-seven got 75 per cent. right. Perhaps one ought to blame the English language rather than the little ones, for most of the traps embodied in the test arise from the fact that in our illogical language we represent the same sound by a diversity of letters and letter groups."

Honour where Honour is Due?

In a letter appearing in a recent number of the "Schoolmaster" we are referred to as the "Dogged-as-does-it Society."

What Does it Spell?

Engineer Storekeeper (dictating) : "Two gross fire bricks."
Stoker (writing) : "Two gross fire b-r-i-x."
Engineer Storekeeper : "B-r-i-x don't spell 'bricks.'"
Stoker : "Well, wot *do* it spell ?"

(From the "Punch" Almanack.)

Can We Blame Him?

"A County Council teacher I met told me yesterday that, looking over a very small lad's 'composition,' he discovered that 'ammernishon-fakterrey' and 'didanaf' were meant to imply 'ammunition factory' and 'didn't half.' Plucky lad!" (From the "Daily Mirror.")

NEW MEMBERS.

Life Members.

Mr. W. H. Baxter, Knapping Mount, Harrogate.
Dr. W. J. Sheppard, 235 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, S.W.15.

Annual Members.

Vice-Prin. James McRae, M.A., Teachers' Training College, Carlton, Melbourne, Australia.
The Rev. W. P. Mason, Easthorpe Rectory, Kelvedon, Essex.
Commander Basil Hall, R.N., Cromer.
Mrs. Ellen Banks, Boxted, Colchester.
Fellows, 76 Southtown Road, Great Yarmouth.
A. M. Healey, 162 Beverley Road, Bolton.
A. E. Hobday, 14 Roman Road, Colchester.
E. Longley, Sandway, near Maidstone.
E. M. Michelin, St. James's Girls' School, Great Yarmouth.
Marjorie J. Milburn, 143 Southtown Road, Great Yarmouth.
G. H. Pamell, 22 Harsnett Road, Colchester.
J. Wharton, 32 Hobart Street, Bolton.
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H. S. Barbour, 81 Salisbury Road, Great Yarmouth.
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Jessie A. Baxendale, West Morelands, Heaton, Bolton.
A. Brindle, 50 Gilnow Road, Bolton, Lancs.
Sarah Brook, 32 Harsnett Road, Colchester.

Misses Ethel Cockshott, 16 Tyson Street, Bradford.
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M. Eccles, 173 Blackburn Road, Bolton.
E. Fitton, Burneside, Great Ormesby, Great Yarmouth.
Edith Goffin, Edward Worlledge Junior School, Gt. Yarmouth.
Helena Gray, 88 Beckside Road, Lidger Green, Bradford.
Annie Higginson, Brandwood Street Council School, Bolton.
G. Hill, 84 Southtown Road, Great Yarmouth.
K. M. Hoey, 100 Tennyson Place, Bradford.
L. Holt, Pike's Lane Council School, Bolton.
Emily Hurr, 13 Anson Road, Southtown, Great Yarmouth.
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Louise James, 1 Sandown Road, Great Yarmouth.
B. Joss, St. Matthew's School, Bolton, Lancs.
E. King, 31 Beaconsfield Road, Great Yarmouth.
F. Lomax, 201 Derby Street, Bolton, Lancs.
E. Mangnall, 18 Shrewsbury Road, Bolton.
Newman, North Street Council School, Colchester.
M. A. Pratt, 93 North Denes Road, Great Yarmouth.
Lily Reynolds, 23 Errington Road, Colchester, Essex.
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Mabel Scott, 38 Wellesley Road, Great Yarmouth.
Ethel M. Singleton, 143 Southtown Road, Great Yarmouth.
Martha Smee, 53 West Stockwell Street, Colchester.
M. B. Smith, 14 Russell Road, Great Yarmouth.
Mary I. S. Spanton, St. James's Infants' School, Great Yarmouth.
A. Stansfield, Allerton Council School (Infants' Department), Bradford.
Alice E. Stoll, The Municipal Secondary School, Bolton.
M. E. Stoodley, County School for Girls, Colchester.
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E. Taylor, 243 Blackburn Road, Bolton.
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B. Wagstaff, The County School for Girls, Colchester.
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C. I. Wilson, Cathedral Infants' School, Ripon.
Wright, Gaskell Street Council School, Bolton.
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Messrs. A. H. Allan, 32 Belmont Avenue, Harrogate.
W. E. Andrews, 11 Hereford Road, Harrogate.
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H. Goode, 33 Marine Parade, Great Yarmouth.
Illit Grondahl, M.A., 15 Clifton Road, Brockley, S.E.4.
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Wm. Heather, 165 Lower Mortlake Road, Richmond, Surrey.

Messrs. Lawrence Hobday, 14 Roman Road, Colchester.
T. E. Hughes, 36 Queen Street, Colchester.
John E. Kent, Church Institute School, Bolton.
A. S. Keywood, 37 Apsley Road, Great Yarmouth.
J. W. Leech, 122 Nelson Road Central, Great Yarmouth.
Wm. H. C. Lewis, Feering School, Kelvedon, Essex.
F. C. Martin, B.Mech.E., Brooklyn, Guildford Road, Farnboro', Hants.
J. W. May, Edward Worlledge School, Great Yarmouth.
S. B. Nayler, 66 Sharples Park, Bolton.
Fred Pearson, 60 Breeze Hill Road, Oldham.
L. C. Pullan, Practising School, Peterborough.
J. Marti Ramis, Cortes 399 3° 2a, Barcelona, Spain.
Edwin Ransom, 24 Ashburnham Road, Bedford.
E. Roberts, Alston, Thurlow Park, Torquay.
R. de Rome, Feversham Street School, Bradford.
E. Sankey, 3 Equitable Street, Oldham.
Harold Schofield, 96 Orlands Street, Bolton.
J. E. Smart, 5 Park Crescent, Undercliffe, Bradford.
A. E. Thoseby, The Secondary School, Harrogate.
A. W. Tillett, 2 Glebe Road, Peterborough.
J. W. Tomlinson, Wolsey City Council School, Bradford.

PRESS NOTICES.

September, October, November.

Educational Times, **Leicester Daily Post**, and the **South African Journal of Science** contained long articles on the advocacy of spelling reform.

Durham Chronicle, **Newcastle Chronicle**, **Newcastle Weekly Journal** (2 letters), **School Government Chronicle**, **Schoolmaster** (2 letters), **Tonbridge Free Press**, **Yorkshire Observer**, **Yorkshire Post** (5 letters) published excellent letters strongly urging the adoption of some measure of spelling reform.

Bulletin of the British Chamber of Commerce for Italy reprinted—italicizing the most striking passages—the brilliant Preface (by Dr. Macan, of Oxford University) to our latest publication, *Breaking the Spell: an Appeal to Common Sense.*

Education printed a long and clever review of *Breaking the Spell: an Appeal to Common Sense.* We understand that the reviewer, who acknowledged he was in favour of revised spelling, was no less a scholar than the distinguished Dr. W. Stuart Macgowan, M.A. The book was also sympathetically referred to in the **Advance Sheet**, Bayonne, N.J., U.S.A., **Educational Record**, and **Modern Language Teaching.**

Eastern Daily Press very favourably reported Prof. Ripman's recent lecture to the Teachers' Association, Great Yarmouth.

Daily Mirror, **Evening Standard**, **Journal of Commerce** (Liverpool), **Schoolmaster**, **Times**, **Yorkshire Post** published references to spelling, some of which were very droll.

Aberdeen Free Press and the **Philomath** included interesting articles dealing with standard speech and its influence on dialect.

The only paper containing a letter adverse to Simplified Spelling was the **Schoolmaster.**

AMONG your friends and acquaintances there are thinking people who care for

Efficiency and Economy in Education

YOU SHOULD ASK THEM

whether any of the following objections to a reform of the spelling have occurred to them :—

O 1. It would interfere with the growth of the language and obscure the derivation of words.

O 2. To give the same spelling to such words as *right, write,* and *rite* would lead to confusion.

O 3. A spelling according to the sounds assumes the existence of a standard speech, which we do not possess.

O 4. Language constantly changes, and a spelling in accordance with the sounds would be always changing, which would be intolerable.

O 5. The present spelling is beautiful, and any change would make it ugly.

YOU SHOULD ASK THEM

whether they have realized the following advantages that would result from the adoption of a rational spelling :—

A 1. Much of the child's brief education time would be saved.

A 2. Spelling would be taught in a reasonable way.

A 3. The teaching of our language and literature would be improved; other school subjects would also benefit.

A 4. The English language would spread rapidly throughout the Empire, and might become the language for universal intercourse.

YOU SHOULD ANSWER THEM

by using the arguments that by this time are doubtless familiar to you; or, if you prefer it, send a post card to the Secretary, S.S.S., 44 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1, asking for one or all of the pamphlets in our Objections Series (O1—O5) and our Advantages Series (A1—A4), which deal briefly but convincingly with all the points that have been enumerated.

Publications of the Simplified Spelling Society

Write to the Secretary, Simplified Spelling Society, 44 Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1, for free specimen copies.

BREAKING THE SPELL: An Appeal to Common Sense. With Preface by Dr. R. W. Macan, Master of University College, Oxford. A most valuable and useful book, tolerantly discussing the various aspects of Spelling Reform, and answering objections to the movement. 54 pp. Price 4d. net.

A FERST REEDER IN SIMPLIFYD SPELING. Printed in large clear type and containing Sound Chart, Poems and Prose. 48 pp. Price 6d. net. (Reduced terms for classes.)

A SEKOND REEDER IN SIMPLIFYD SPELING. Includes poems and short stories. 54 pp. 6d. net. (Reduced terms for classes.)

(The schools experimenting with Simplified Spelling are using these Readers *with great success*.)

REPORT OF A SCHOOL EXPERIMENT IN TEACHING READING BY MEANS OF SIMPLIFIED SPELLING. Of particular interest to teachers or those contemplating an experiment with our scheme. 2 pp. Gratis.

WHY DOES THE ENGLISH CHILD NOT "EXPLODE INTO READING AND WRITING"? 4 pp. Gratis.

THE STAR. A story by H. G. Wells. (In Simplified Spelling.) Price 2d. net.

The Society's Quarterly Organ, written in Simplified Spelling. Price 2d. net.

PROPOSALS FOR A SIMPLIFIED SPELLING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. By Walter Ripman, M.A., and William Archer, M.A. 74 pp. Price 1s. net.

LIFTING THE BURDEN FROM THE SCHOOL CHILD: A scheme of Simplified Spelling briefly described. A practical pamphlet for propaganda purposes. 8 pp. Gratis.

ADVANTAGES AND OBJECTIONS. (See third page of cover.) Gratis.

TO TEACHERS. By Miss Ethel Gavin, M.A. 4 pp. Gratis.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ENGLISH SPELLING. 8pp. Gratis.

SIMPLIFIED DUTCH *v.* COMPLICATED ENGLISH IN SOUTH AFRICA. By Joseph Hogarth (Johannesburg). 8 pp. Gratis.

A BUSINESS MAN'S VIEWS. Interview with Dr. G. B. Hunter. 4 pp. Gratis.

THE COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGES OF AN INTELLIGENT SPELLING. By Andrew Brodrick. 8pp. Gratis.

(These pamphlets *never fail* to convert business men and women.)

SOME PRESS OPINIONS ON SIMPLIFIED SPELLING. 8 pp. Gratis.

An assortment of neat labels, bearing obvious simplifications, for affixing to correspondence. 100 for 1s.

Except where otherwise stated, all the literature mentioned above is written in ordinary spelling.

C. F. Hodgson & Son, Printers, Newton Street, London, W.C. 2.